

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
EUGENE DISTRICT
NORTH/PUGH CREEKS AQUATIC HABITAT RESTORATION PLAN
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT No. OR090-EA-01-10

ORIGINAL PLANS

The purpose of this Aquatic Habitat Improvement Project is to provide site specific project detail, and improve the quality and quantity of suitable habitat in tributaries of the Middle Siuslaw basin to benefit anadromous and resident fish and other aquatic species.

The proposed action and alternatives are in conformance with the *Record of Decision for Amendments to Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management Planning Documents within the Range of the Northern Spotted Owl, April 1994 (ROD)*, and the *Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan, June 1995 (Eugene District ROD/RMP)* as amended by the *Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines, USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management January 2001*. The analysis contained in these EIS's are incorporated by reference.

The above referenced documents are available for review at the Eugene District Office or on the internet at <http://www.or.blm.gov/nwfp.htm>. Additional site-specific information is available for review in the North/Pugh Creeks Aquatic Habitat Improvement Project analysis file at the Eugene District Office.

Information and analysis for the specific project proposals within this EA are tiered to the Upper Siuslaw River Aquatic Restoration Plan OR090-EA-98-17, dated May 19, 1998. No changes related to the actions are made to the decision record for the Upper Siuslaw River Aquatic Restoration Plan. Information summarized in this plan is from the Eugene District Siuslaw Watershed Analysis (February 1996). This EA provides project site specifics and an additional ID team review prior to project implementation. The proposed action and alternatives are also in conformance with the Aquatic Conservation Strategy in the Northwest Forest Plan.

The proposed action will follow general conditions related to fill removal activities as listed in the renewal permit (FP-13963) issued by the Oregon Department of State Lands and the Army Corps of Engineers (September 26, 2000).

PROPOSAL

Two separate proposed actions, addressed as Objectives in OR090-EA-98-17, will be delineated in this EA. These actions are the third phase in a three year project that included the replacement of the

barrier culverts on North and Pugh Creeks at their confluences with the Siuslaw River (1999) and installation of structures in the Siuslaw River below the confluences of North and Pugh Creeks, designed for hydraulic restoration and trapping of sediments originating in these tributaries (2000).

The first proposed action for FY01 is to construct instream structures and replace barrier culverts in North Creek, a tributary of the Siuslaw River. Instream work would be conducted on BLM managed lands in T19S R8W Section 13. Road 19-8-13 parallels much of the project area and is maintained by BLM.

Proposal two includes the construction of instream structures and replacement barrier culverts in Pugh Creek, both on BLM and lands managed by Roseburg Resources Company (RRC). Project sites are located in T19S R8W Section 11 (BLM lands) and T19S R8W Section 12 (RRC). Road 19-8-11.1 parallels much of the project area and is maintained by BLM. Pugh Creek projects would be completed under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed by the BLM, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Roseburg Resources Inc. (11/30/99). Activities on non-Federal Lands are authorized by the Wyden Amendment.

ALTERNATIVES

Partial Implementation Alternative - This alternative would implement selected portions of the Proposed Action. If implemented, the Proposed Action or selected portions of the proposed action would contribute to the restoration of natural hydraulic function, provide stream complexity for anadromous fish, resident fish, and other aquatic species. Impacts of the Partial Implementation Alternative would be the same as the Proposed Action. The difference would be in the scope, with fewer positive or negative short or long term impacts.

Under a No Action Alternative, none of the proposed actions would be carried out as part of the restoration plan. No additional structuring would be installed in the stream channel. Some actions, such as culvert rehabilitation may be performed as part of other programs such as road maintenance.

EXPECTED IMPACTS

All proposed actions would require some short-term disturbance to the road right of way, riparian zone, or stream channel. All actions are in areas that have previously been disturbed by management activities. No new roads would be created as a result of the proposed actions, although temporary accesses would be needed for movement of equipment and materials from existing permanent roads to restoration sites in the stream channel.

Adverse Impacts include a transient increase in sediment from culvert rehabilitation, road stabilization and channel structuring; a reduction in overstory and understory vegetation in riparian areas during riparian site preparation and planting, and potential disturbance of fishes, invertebrates, and aquatic communities in the stream channel during culvert rehabilitation and channel structuring as described in

EA-98-17.

The impacts to vegetative characteristics associated with individual fisheries structures are expected to be relatively low except in access routes used to move materials from roadways to the stream channel. Rooding and tree yarding would result in soil disturbance and compaction, and would increase the likelihood of non-native and potentially noxious species entering and/or increasing in the project area. Surface soil disturbance may also result in disruption of soil dwelling fungal hyphae that play an important role in nutrient cycling and decomposition. Suggested botanical mitigation measures under the *Additional Mitigation* paragraph below should help alleviate the potential for the increase or spread of non-native species, and high levels of mycorrhizal disturbance.

As a result of the placement of structures in the stream, water surface levels would be raised at all flow levels. During peak flows more water would flow into riparian areas. Project designs limit the potential for erosion. The flooding of riparian areas provides a positive benefit for deposition of silts in riparian areas and increased groundwater infiltration. Previous stream projects that have raised water levels have resulted in an increase in wetlands in the adjoining riparian area. The projects are expected to contribute to an overall improvement in water quality and reduced flooding downstream.

CRITICAL ELEMENTS

There would be no adverse impacts from the proposed action to regional or local air quality, prime or unique farmlands, cultural resources, floodplains, areas of critical environmental concern, environmental justice, native American religious concerns, threatened or endangered species, invasive nonnative species, hazardous or solid waste, wild and scenic rivers or wilderness. Water quality, riparian zones, and the habitat of the threatened coho salmon are expected to benefit from the proposed actions.

ADDITIONAL MITIGATION

Project areas would be surveyed for Special Status and Survey and Manage species (categories A and C) using current protocols. These pre-disturbance surveys would be completed prior to the Decision Notice. In the event a Special Status or Survey and Manage species is present, the appropriate mitigation or project modifications would occur.

Prior to beginning on-ground project work BLM would complete all required ESA consultation, conferencing, and protocol clearances.

In addition to mitigating measures identified in EA-98-17 all temporary accesses would be blocked and re-vegetated following completion of project work.

The following botanical recommendations and design features to maintain the native vegetation component within the project area and to prevent the introduction and spread of nonnative and or noxious weeds would be followed: 1) Retain and leave as much existing coarse woody debris

(including stumps) as possible on site; 2) Keep roading to a minimum to prevent the further spread of noxious weeds; 3) Require cleaning of heavy equipment prior to entering project areas to prevent the further spread of noxious weeds; 4) Remove any individual Scot's Broom plants in project areas; 5) To help maintain the existing native plant communities, seed roadsides with native species mixtures. If native seed is not available and seeding is necessary for erosion control, use an annual (70%) and perennial (30%) rye mixture with strict guidelines on seed purity (little crop content and no noxious weed content); 6) All tree falling should occur away from BLM sensitive plant sites; 7) No prescribed burning, tree planting, or other human disturbances in BLM sensitive plant sites.

Activities associated with projects within 0.25 miles of suitable murrelet habitat will not begin until 2 hours after sunrise and shall end 2 hours before sunset. Installation of the crossings will be conducted between July 1 and September 15 (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife restrictions) to minimize the adverse impacts to aquatic species.

CONSULTATION

The proposed actions are consistent with the description and terms and conditions under the *Programmatic Biological Assessment and Biological Opinion for Ongoing USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management Activities Affecting Oregon Coast Range Province, Oregon* for the Oregon Coast coho salmon issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) - September 1998 and extended on July 5, 2000.

The Programmatic Biological Assessment addressing this proposal related to Federally listed or proposed terrestrial animals was submitted to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) on December 15, 2000. Because of the potential for audio disturbance to spotted owls and marbled murrelets during the critical nesting period, this proposed action for spotted owls would have a "May Affect, but is Not Likely to Adversely Affect" and for marbled murrelets a "May Affect, Likely to Adversely Affect" call. The USFWS response, in the form of a Biological Opinion, is expected prior to on ground work. This action would not take place prior to the issuance of this Opinion. Activities associated with projects within 0.25 miles of suitable murrelet habitat will not begin until 2 hours after sunrise and shall end 2 hours before sunset.

CRITICAL HABITAT

North and Pugh Creeks are critical habitat for the Oregon Coast coho salmon. Determination of effects for critical habitat are the same as the determination of effects for restoration activities under the Programmatic Biological Assessment and Biological Opinion, and are covered by the same biological assessment and biological opinion as extended in the NMFS letter of July 5, 2000.

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT

Coho salmon use North and Pugh Creeks for migration, spawning and rearing. The proposed project is in the ESU for the federally-listed threatened Coastal coho salmon. Coho salmon use here has declined recently due to a reduction in available spawning and rearing habitat and habitat disconnection caused by undersized barrier culverts. These tributaries are too small for use by chinook salmon, however they

do spawn in the Siuslaw River near the confluences of North and Pugh Creeks. Construction of instream structures involves placement of materials in the channel (logs, boulders and gravels) to raise channel elevations, increase deposition of spawning gravels and to increase the availability of complex rearing habitat. Proposed culvert replacements involve excavating around and removal of the existing culverts followed by work in the channel to create the replacement. Appropriate measures would be taken to limit potential impacts, but some downstream coho may experience disturbance from sediment production and operation of equipment in the stream channel. The disruption would be short term, and would occur during periods when no eggs or fry are present and low flows would limit impacts. Because of the potential short-term disturbance, the project would be considered likely to adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat for the coho salmon, but is not likely to adversely affect Essential Fish Habitat for chinook salmon. No direct affect would occur to chinook salmon which would not be present in the Siuslaw River near North and Pugh Creeks at the time project work is undertaken. The proposed restoration activities are in accordance with the description and terms and conditions in the NMFS Oregon Coastal Coho Programmatic Biological Opinion. The overall impact of the proposed activity would be to increase the habitat available for use by coho salmon.

REFERENCE

Oregon Department of State Lands and US Army Corps of Engineers. September 2000. Joint fill/removal authorization. Permit number FP-13963 Renewal. 3pp.

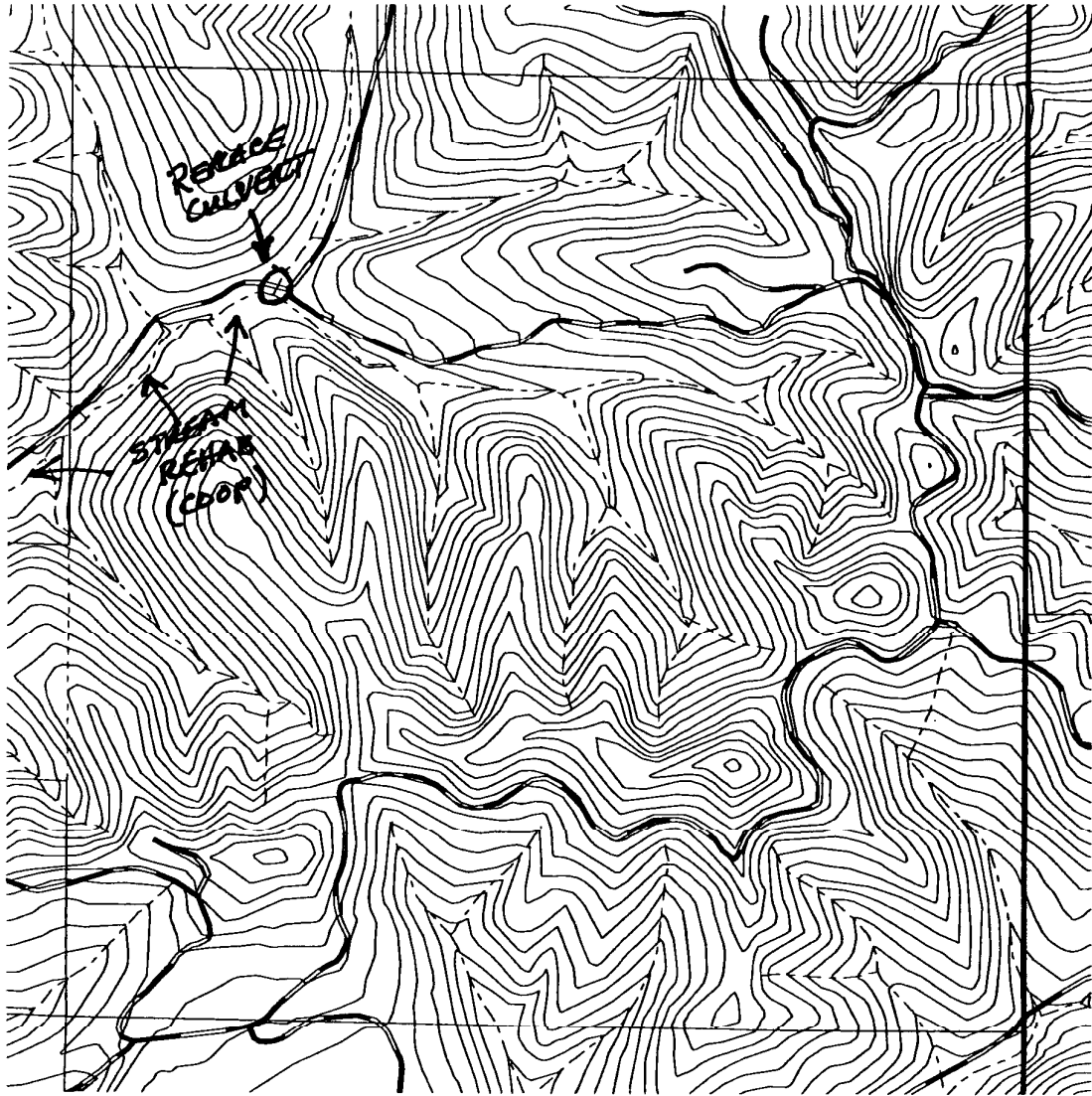
USDI, Bureau of Land Management. June 1995. Eugene District Record of Decision and Resource Management Plan. Eugene District Office, Eugene, Oregon.

USDI, Bureau of Land Management. February 1996. Siuslaw Watershed Analysis. Eugene District Office, Eugene, Oregon.

USDA, Forest Service and USDI, Bureau of Land Management. February 1994. Final supplemental environmental impact statement on management of habitat for late successional and old-growth forest related species within the range of the northern spotted owl (Northwest Forest Plan).

USDA Forest Service and USDI Bureau of Land Management January 2001. Record of Decision for Amendments to the Survey and Manage, Protection Buffer, and other Mitigation Measures Standards and Guidelines.

2001

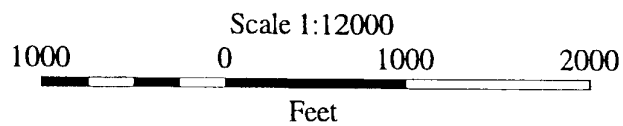


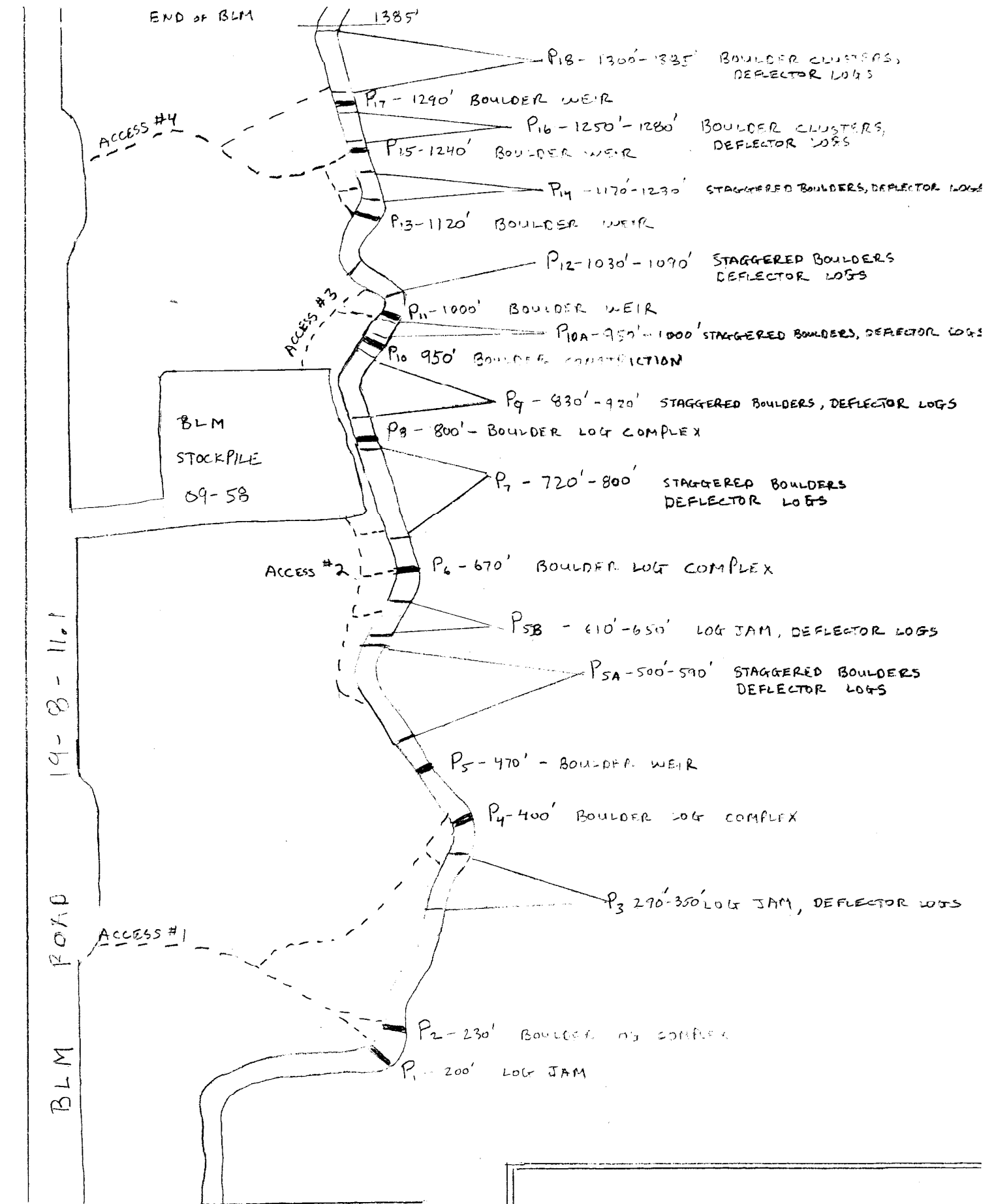
- BLM
- - - - Streams
- Roads
- + + + + Railroads

PUGH CREEK RESTORATION

T.19S, R.08W. Sec. 12

Contour Interval: 40 Ft





BLM 18-8-34

SINSLAW ROAD

PUGH CREEK RESTORATION
PROJECT 2001



PUGH CREEK CULVERT

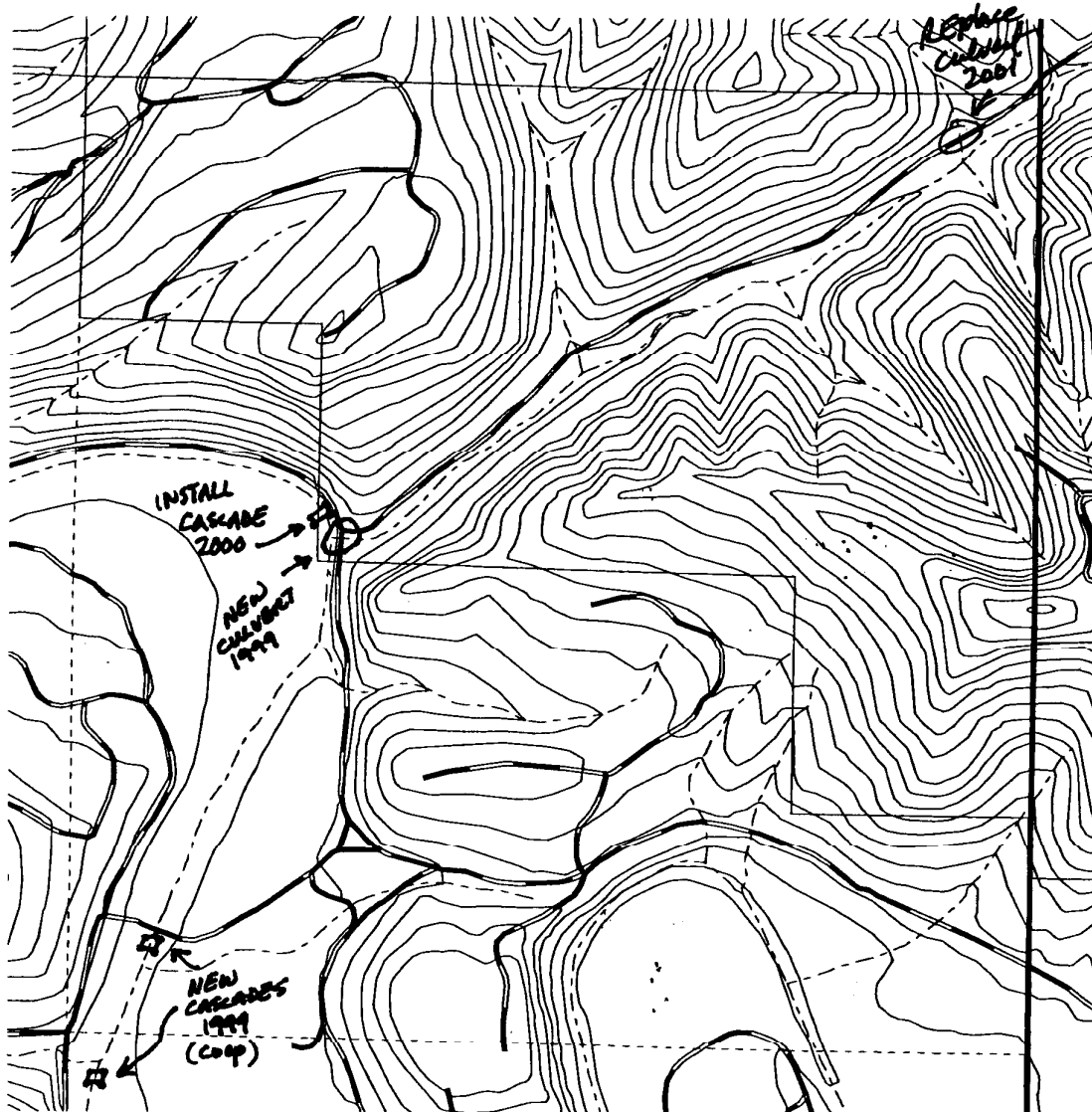
- UNDERSIZED**
- EFFLUENT VIEW**
- PRIVATE OWNERSHIP**
- MAINSTEM**



PUGH CREEK CULVERT

- INFLUENT VIEW**
- BROKEN TILE WITH
DEBRIS COLLECTION**
- MAINSTEM**
- PRIVATE OWNERSHIP**

2000 - 2001



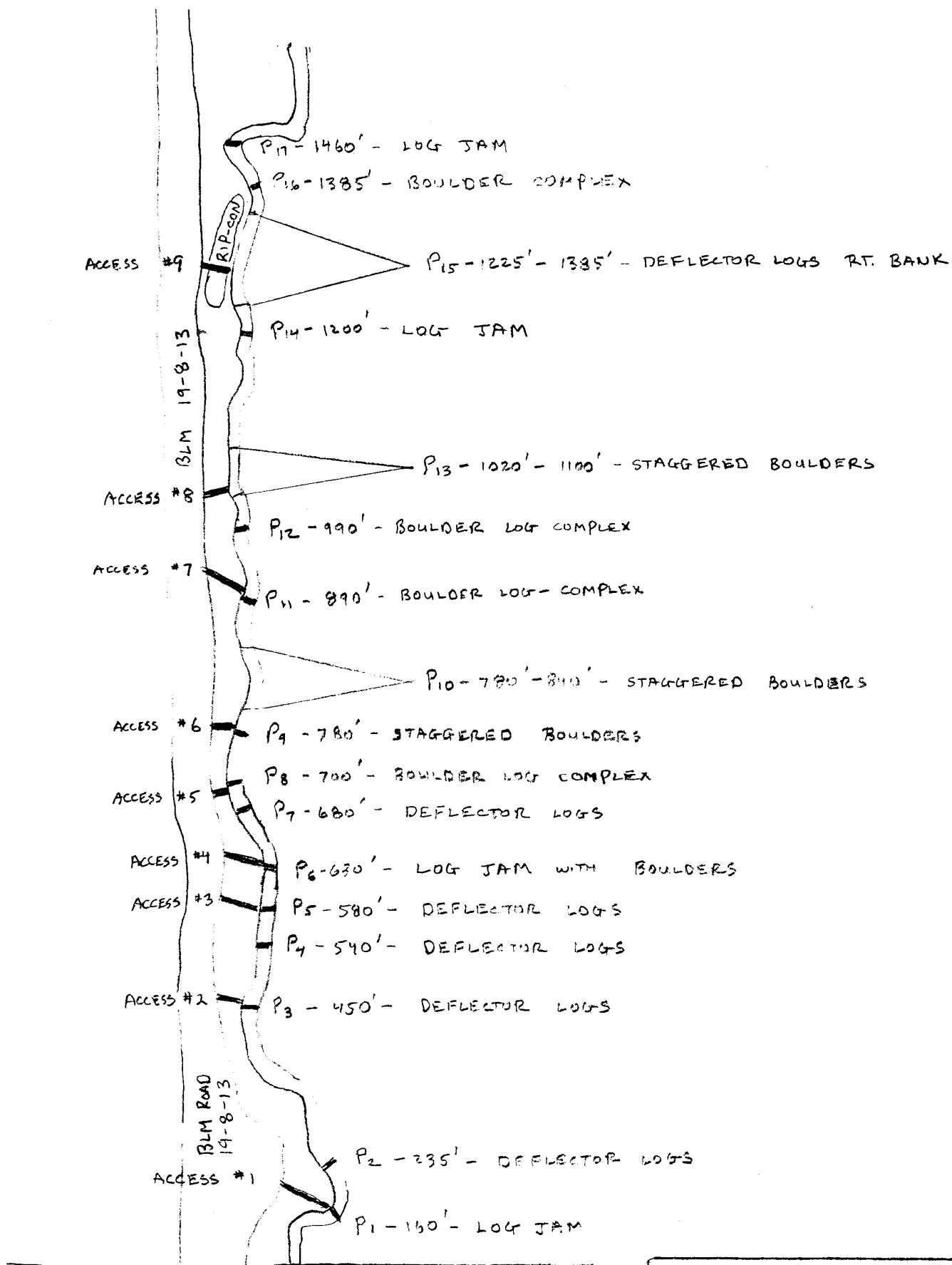
- BLM
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NORTH CREEK RESTORATION

T.19S, R.08W. Sec. 13

Contour Interval: 40 Ft

Scale 1:12000
1000 0 1000 2000
Feet



BLM ROAD 18-8-34

SINSLAW ROAD

NORTH CREEK RESTORATION
PROJECT 2001



NORTH CREEK TRIBUTARY
- EFFLUENT VIEW
- FISH RAMBER